

# JORROCKS ON 'UNTING



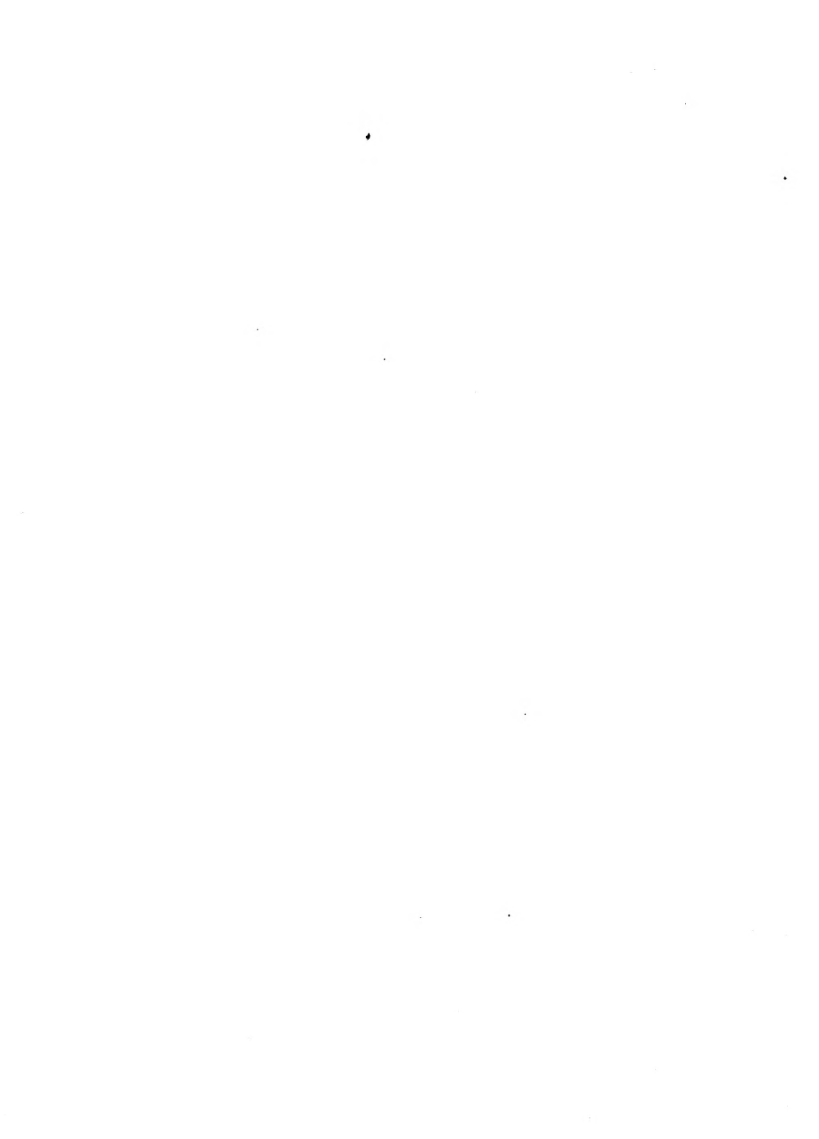
PICTURES BY  
**CECIL ALDIN**



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PRECISELY as the clock was done striking seven, Mr. Jorrocks ascended the platform, attended by a few friends, and was received with loud cheers from the gentlemen, and the waving of handkerchiefs from the lady part of the audience. When the applause had subsided, Mr. Jorrocks advanced to the front of the platform, and thus addressed the audience :—

“ Frinds and fellow-countrymen ! Lend me your ears. That’s to say, listen to wot I’m

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again' to say to you. This night I shall enlighten you on the all-important ceremony of takin' the field. (Loud applause.)

“TAKIN' THE FIELD!” repeated he, throwing out his arms, and casting his eyes up at the elegant looping of his canopy. “TAKIN' THE FIELD! glorious sound! wot words can convey anything 'alf so delightful?”

“In my mind's eye I see the 'ounds in all their glossy pride a trottin' around Arterxerxes, who stamps and whinnies with delight at their company. There's old Pristess with her speckled sides, lookin' as wise as a Christian, and Trusty, and Tuneable, and Warrior, and Wagrant and Workman, and Wengence, and all the glorious comrades o' the chase.

“But to the pint. Ingenious youth, having got his 'oss, and learned to tackle him, let me now, from the bonded warehouse of my knowledge, prepare him for the all-glorious ceremony of the 'unt.

“Bliss my 'eart, wot a many ways there is

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of enjoyin' the chase," continued Mr. Jorrocks, "and 'ow one man is led into folly and extravagance by another ! Because great Sampson Stout, who rides twenty stun', with the nerves of a steam-hengine, keeps twelve 'unters and two 'acks, little Tommy Titmouse, who scarcely turns nine with his saddle, must have as many, though he dare hardly ride over a water furrow. Because Sir Yawnberry Dawdle, who lies long in bed, sends on, Mr. Larkspur, who is up with the sun, must needs do the same, though he is obliged to put off time, lest he should arrive afore his 'oss. Because Lady Giddyfool puts a hyacinth in her lord's button-'ole, every hass in his 'unt must send to Covent Garden to get some. I werrily believes, if a lord was to stick one of my peacock Gabriel Junks's feathers in his 'at, there would be fools to follow his example ; out upon them, say I : 'unting is an expensive amusement or not, jest as folks choose to make it.

"There's a nasty word called 'can't,' that

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does an infinity of mischief. One can't 'unt without eight 'osses; one can't do without two 'acks; one can't ride in a country saddle; one can't do this, and one can't do that—hang your can'ts! Let a man look at those below him instead o' those above, and think 'ow much better hoff he is nor they. (Applause.) Surely the man with one 'oss is better off than the man with none! (Renewed applause.)

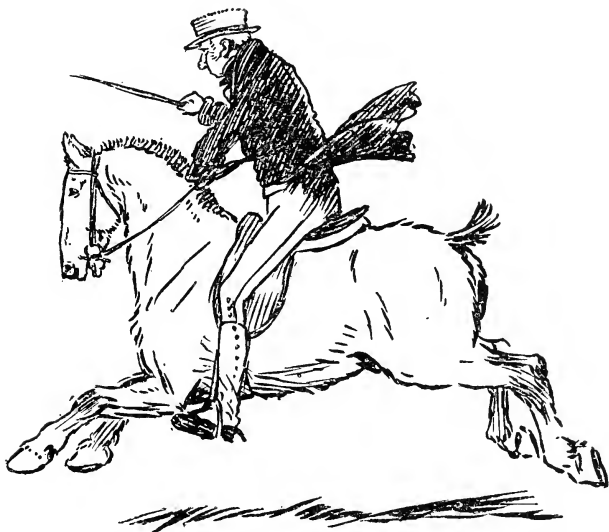
“Believe me, my beloved 'earers, if a man's inclined for the chase, he'll ride a'most anything, or valk sooner than stay at 'ome. I often thinks, could the keen foot-folks change places with the fumigatin' yards o' leather and scarlet, wot a much better chance there would be for the chase! They, at all events, come out from a *genuine* inclination for the sport, and not for mere show-sake, as too many do.

“Dash my vig, wot men I've seen in the 'unting-field! men without the slightest notion of 'unting, but who think it right to try if

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they like it, jest as they would try smokin' or eaten' olives after dinner.

“ ‘ You should get a red coat, and join the



'unt,' says a young gen'leman's old aunt ; and forthwith our hero orders two coats of the newest cut, five pair of spurs, ten pair of breeches, twenty pair of boots, waistcoats of

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every cut and figure, a bunch of whips, diachulum drawers, a cigar-case for his pocket, a pocket siphonia, a sandwich-case for one side, and a shoe-case for t'other, and keeps a hair-bed afloat agin he comes 'ome with a broken leg. (Laughter and applause.)

“The custom of riding in scarlet is one it becomes me to speak upon;—I doesn't know nothin' about the hantiquity of it, or whether Julius Cæsar, or any other of those antient covies, sported it or not; but, like most subjects, a good deal may be said on both sides of the question. There's no doubt it's a good colour for wear, and that it tends to the general promotion of fox-'unting, seeing that two-thirds of the men wot come out and subscribe wouldn't do so if they had to ride in black. Still, I think ingenuous youth should not be permitted to wear it at startin', for a scarlet coat in the distance, though chock full of hignorance, is quite as allurin' as when it encloses the most experienced sportsman.







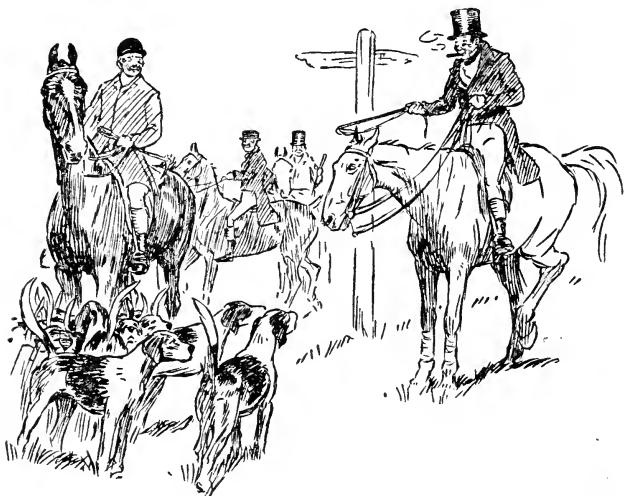
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“Youngsters should be cautious o’ spurs ; —they may use them wot is called incontinently, and get into grief. I disagree with Geoffry Gambado, who recommends the free use of them, as tendin’ to keep the blood in circulation and preventin’ one’s toes catchin’ cold. He recommends spurrin’ i’ the shoulder, where he says an ’oss has most feelin’, because he has most weins ; adding, that by spurrin’ at his body, five times in six your labour is lost ; for if you are a short man, you spur the saddle-cloth only ; if a leggy one, you never touch him at all ; and if middlin’, the rider wears out his own girths, without the ’oss being a bit the better for it ; but my own opinion is, that the less ingenuous youth uses them the better.

“Flattery is easier accomplished than wit, and the meet is a place where butter, with a little knowledge, will go a long way. All masters of ’ounds like praise. Some are so fond on it, that they butter themselves. If

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you see 'ounds' ribs, and their loins are well filled, and flanks hollow, you may say they look like their work ; if they're fat, say they



are werry even in condition ; if lean, that they look like goin' a bust ; if jest noways in 'ticklar, you can't get wrong if you say you never saw a nicer lot. If you see some with clips on the hears, or along the backs, you may





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conclude they are new comers, and ax where they are from. Rich coloured 'ounds you may liken to the Belvoir, and then you can talk of Goodhall and Guider, or of the Quorn True-man, or even go back as far as Furrier and Hosbaldeston ; and swear you never saw sich legs and feet ; in short, let legs and feet, or legs and loins, be the burthen of your song. Beware of callin' 'ounds dogs, or sterns tails. Sich a slip would make the M.F.H. turn tail on you directly.

“ It looks worry knowin' to take a bit o' biscuit out of your pocket, as you are lookin' over the 'ounds, and make them rise on their hind legs to receive it, while you scrutinise them worry attentively. This is a most scientific proceedin' and will immediately stamp you as a worry knowin' 'and, if not for an M.F.H. himself. Still let your talk be of legs and loins, with an occasional mention of helbows and shoulders. Perfection ! symmetry ! 'andsome ! level ! bone ! breedin' ! condition ! Lord

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'Enry ! Sir Richard, Sir Tatton, Mr. Jorrocks, —are terms that may be thrown in at random, jest as the butter seems to go down. If, however, ingenuous youth's afraid o' bein' tempted out of his depth, it's a safe wentur to look werry approvinly at the pack generally, and then say that 'they're larger nor some he has seen, and not so large as others.' (Laughter.) In sayin' this, it may p'raps be well jest to feel his 'oss with the spur, so as to make him wince, which will give him an excuse for withdrawin' on the score o' being afear'd o' kickin' the 'ounds, and save him from bein' axed to name the larger or smaller packs he's seen, which might be inconvenient.

“ 'Untsmen are either 'eaven-born or hidiots —there's no medium. Every schoolboy can criticise their performance. Its 'stonishin' how quickly 'untsmen are run up and down, jest like the funds, with the bulls and the bears. As no M.F.H. keeps what he considers a fool, it may be well to commence in the soapy line ;

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for even though a master may abuse a servant himself, he may not fancy his field doing so too.

“ Let us s’pose the last, *last* fumigatin’ piece o’ conceit has cast up, and the M.F.H. gives the hoffice to the ’untsman to throw off. ’Osses’ ’eads turn one way, th’ ’ounds brisk up at the move, the coffee-room breaks up, frinds pair off to carry out jokes, while the foot people fly to the ’ills, and the bald-’eaded keeper stands ’at in ’and at the gate, to let th’ ’ounds into cover.

“ ‘ *Eleu in!* ’ at length cries the ’untsman, with a wave of his ’and, and in an instant his ’osses’ ’eels are deserted. The vipper-in has scuttled round the cover, and his rate and crack are ’eard on the far side. ‘ Gently, Conqueror ! Conqueror, have a care ! Ware are ! ware are ! ’ ”

Mr. Jorrocks then took his newly bound Beckford from the table at the back of the platform, and read as follows :—

“ ‘ ’Ow musical their tongues ! And as they

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get near to him, 'ow the chorus fills ! 'Ark ! he is found. Now, vere are all your sorrows and your cares, ye gloomy souls ! or where your pains and aches, ye complainin' ones ! one holloo has dispelled them all. Vot a crash they make ! and hecho seeminly takes pleasure to repeat the sound. The 'stonished traveller forsakes his road ; lured by its melody, the listenin' ploughman now stops his plough, and every distant shepherd neglects his flock, and runs to see him break. Vot joy ! vot heagerness in every face !'

"Now," said Mr. Jorrocks, smacking his lips again, "that's what I call real prime stuff—the concentrated essence of 'untin'—the XXX of sportin', so different from the wire-spun, wishy-washy yarns of modern penny-a-liners, who smother their meanin' (if they have any) in words. If I've read Peter once, I've read him a hundred times, and yet I finds somethin' fresh to admire every time. Wernor and Hood, Birchin Lane, published this edition



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in 1796; and on the title-page is pasted a hextract from a newspaper that would adorn a monument. 'Monday, 8th March, 1811, at his seat, Stapleton, in Dorsetshire, Peter Beckford, Esq., aged 70. Mr. Beckford was a celebrated fox-'unter, and hauthor of "Letters on 'unting.'" There's an inscription for a marble monument! '*Multum in parvo*,' as Pomponius Ego would say. Blow me tight! but I never looks at Billy Beckford supplicatin' the king on his marble monument in Guildhall, but I exclaims, 'Shake Billy from his pedestal and set up Peter!' (Hisses and applause.)

"I once wrote my epitaph, and it was werry short,—

'*Hic jacet Jorrocks*'

was all wot I said; but the unlettered 'untsman, or maybe M.F.H., might pass me by, jest as he would a dead emperor. Far different would it be should this note follow,—'Mr. J. was a celebrated fox-hunter, and lecturer upon

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'unting.' Then would the saunterin' sportsman pause as he passed, and drop a tribute to the



memory of one who loved the chase so well. But I'm gettin' prosaic and off the line. Let us 'ark back into cover! The chase, I sings! Let's see.

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“We had jest found our fox. Well, then, let's at Peter again, for there's no one boils one hup into a gallop like him. Here's a description of the thief o' the world afore he breaks.” Mr. Jorrocks reads:—

“‘Mark 'ow he runs the cover's hutmost limits, yet dares not wentur forth; the 'ounds are still too near. That check is lucky! Now, if our frinds 'ead him not, he will soon be off!’

“TALLI-HO!” screamed Mr. Jorrocks, at the top of his voice. “Dash my vig, that's the cry!” continued he, holding his hand in the air. “‘See 'ow pale the gen'leman in light scarlet and bishop's boots is turnin', and how delighted old Jack Rasper, in the cut-away olive, broad cords, and hoganys is; his low-crowned 'at's in the hair, for he sees the warmint, a sight more glorious nor the lord mayor's show; yet he 'olloas not! Ah, it's talli-ho back! The fox is 'eaded by yon puppy in purple, strikin' a light on the pommel of his saddle. 'Ope he'll soon be sick! Th' 'ounds

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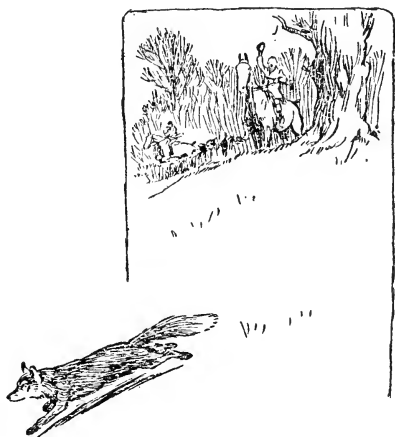
turn short, and are at him again. Have at him, my beauties ! Have at him, my darlin's !



Have at him, I say ! Yonder he goes at t'other end !—now he's away ! Old Rasper has him again ! “Talli-ho, away !” he cries. The old low-crowned 'at's in the hair, and now every man 'oops and 'olloas to the amount of his

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superscription. Twang! twang! twang! goes the Percival; crack! crack! crack! go the



whips; 'ounds, 'osses, and men, are in a glorious state of excitement! Full o' beans and benevolence!'

"So am I, my beloved 'earers," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after a pause; "and must let off some steam, or I shall be teachin' you to over-ride the 'ounds." So saying, Mr. Jorrocks

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retired to the back of the platform, and cooled himself with a fresh glass of hot brandy and water. Presently he returned, and thus resumed his discourse.

“ Oh ! my beloved 'earers, if I had been at the great Mr. Pomponius Hego's helbow when in describin' this critical period of the chase he penned the words 'go along, there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,' I'd ha' seen if I couldn't ha' got him to put in 'now 'old your jaws, and 'old 'ard ! and let 'em settle quietly to the scent.' Believe me, my beloved 'earers, the words 'go along, there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,' have lost many a run and saved the life of many a warmint. 'Ow I likes to see the 'ounds come quietly out, settlin' and collectin' together, gradually mending their pace as they go, till they brew up a reg'lar bust. That's the way to make the foxes cry 'Capevi !' ” added he. (Laughter and applause.)

“ Well, then, my beloved 'earers, glorious

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talli-ho ! talli-ho !—whose very echo kivers me all over with the creeps—is holloed and repeated, and responded and re-echoed, and th' 'ounds are settlin' to the scent. As soon as ever you 'ear the cry, make up your minds either to go on or go 'ome. But I won't s'pose that any man will stop stirrin' till the puddin's done ; at all ewents, not till he sees a fence, so thrust your 'eads well into your 'ats, tighten your reins, 'arden your 'earts, and with elbows and legs, elbows and legs, get forrard to the 'ounds." Mr. Jorrocks suiting the action to the word, straddling and working an imaginary horse with his arms.

"Now we are away ! The cover's wacated, and there's not another within four miles, which courtesy will call fourteen ! Vich vay's the vind ? South-east, as I live. Then he's away for Brammelkite Brake ! Now for your topographical dictionaries, or, vot is still better, some gemman with a map of the country in his 'ead. The field begins to settle into places,

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like folks at the play. If there's no parson to pilot the way, gen'lemen with 'osses to sell



take the first rank. Every one now sees who are there, and many may be wantin' at the end to tell who come in so ; a rasper well negotiated at this time o' day has sold many a screw. After the gen'lemen with 'osses to sell comes



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the 'untsman, entreatin' the gen'lemen with 'osses to sell not to press upon the 'ounds; but as he only talks to their backs, they regard the exhortation as a mere figure o' speech. The top-sawyers of the 'unt will be close on the 'untsman. There will not be many of these; but should there be a barrack in the neighbourhood, some soger officers will most likely mex up and ride at the 'ardest rider among 'em. The dragon soger officer is the most dangerous, and may be known by the viskers under his nose. A foot soger officer's 'oss is generally better in his wind than on his legs. They generally wear chin wigs, and always swear the leaps are nothin' compared with those in the county they came from—Cheapside, p'raps.

“In the wake of the top-sawyers and soger officers will come your steady two 'oss men, their eyes to the 'ounds, their thoughts in the chase, regardless of who crams or who cranes. These generally wear cords, their viskers are greyish,

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and their brown top-boots look as if they have never been wite.

“The ‘safe pilot’ is generally a man with a

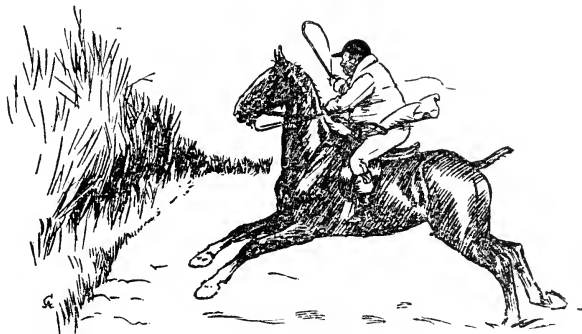


broad back, clad in bottle-green, with plain metal buttons, white neckcloth, striped veskit, drab kerseys, with ribbons danglin' over a 'hogany top; or maybe in the scarlet coat of the 'unt, with a hash-plant, to denote that he is a gate-opener, and not a leaper: a man of this sort will pilot a youngster all day without ridin' over a fence. He knows every twist, every turn, every gate, every gap, in the country, and though sometimes appearin' to ride away

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from the 'ounds, by skirtin' and nickin', will often gain Reynard's p'int afore them—p'raps afore Reynard himself!



“Gentlemen wot take their ideas of 'unting from Mr. Hackermann's pictor-shop in Regent's Street must have rum notions of the sport. There you see red laps flyin' out in all directions, and 'osses apparently to be had for catchin'. True, that in 'unting men will roll about—but so they will on the road; and I'd rayther have two bumps in a field than one on a pike. Danger is everywhere! An accomplished frind of

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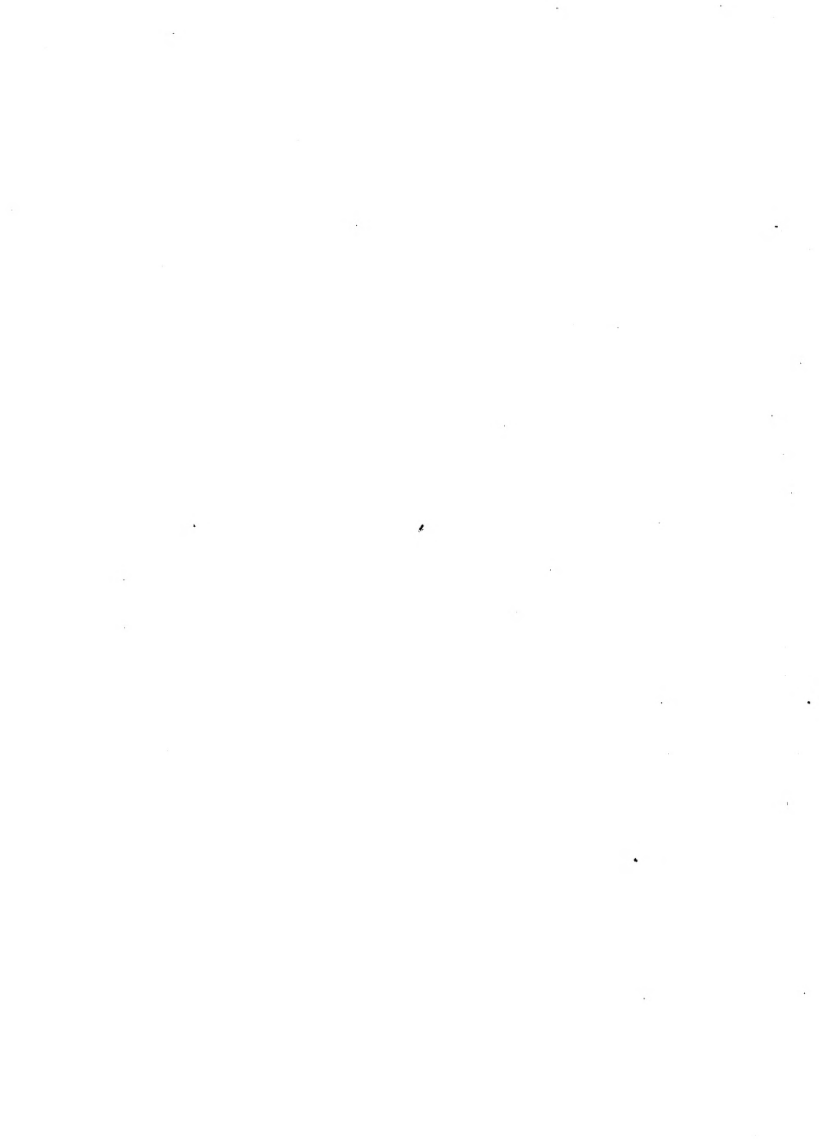
mine says, 'Impendet *omnibus* periculum'—Danger 'angs over an omnibus: and 'Mors *omnibus* est communis,'—You may break your neck in an *omnibus*: but are we, on that account, to shun the wehicle of which the same great scholar says, 'Wirtus parvo pretio licet ab omnibus,'—Wirtue may ride cheap in an omnibus? Surely not!

"Still, a fall's a hawful thing. Fancy a great sixteen 'and 'oss lyin' on one like a blanket, or sittin' with his monstrous hemispheres on one's chest, sendin' one's werry soul out o' one's nostrils! Dreadful thought! Vere's the brandy?" Hereupon Mr. Jorrocks again retired to the back of the platform to compose his nerves.

"Now, my beloved 'earers," continued he, returning and wiping his mouth on the back of his hand,—“Now, my beloved 'earers, let's draw on old Peter for a run, for I really think a good suck of 'im is a'most as good as a tuck out at the Ship and Turtle Tavern.

"Here we 'ave 'im," continued Mr. Jorrocks,





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opening at the place, and proceeding to read with all due energy and emphasis: “ ‘Mind, Galloper, ’ow he leads them? It’s difficult to ’stinguish which is first, they run in such good style; yet *he* is the foremost ’ound. The goodness of his nose is not less excellent than his speed:—’ow he carries the scent! and when he loses it, see ’ow eagerly he flings to recover it again! There—now he’s at ’ead again! See ’ow they top the ’edge! Now, now they mount the ’ill!—Observe wot a ’ead they carry; and show me, if thou canst, one shuffler or shirker ’mongst ’em all: are they not like a parcel of brave fellows, who, when they ’gage in an undertakin’, determine to share its fatigue and its dangers equally’ mongst them?’

“Capital!” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, smacking his lips. “Excellent indeed. That’s jest precisely like my ’ounds.

“Dash my vig, if I could but get a clever feller like Leech to draw me a panorama o’ the chase, with all my beauties goin’ like beans

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—'eads up and sterns down, and a lot o' trumps ridin' as they should do—near enough to 'ear their sweet music, but not too near to prevent their swingin' and spreadin' like a rocket to make their own cast, I'd—I'd—I'd—bowl Halbert Smith and his wite mountain and his black box right down Sin Jimses Street into the Thames, and set up i' the 'Giptian 'All myself." (Great laughter and applause.) When it subsided, Mr. Jorrocks, returning to his volume, said, "Peter now does a little potry, and we'll do ditto. Here it is :—

——“ *Far o'er the rocky 'ills we range,  
And dangerous our course ; but in the brave  
True courage never fails. In wain the stream  
In foaming eddies whirls, in wain the ditch  
Wide gapin' threatens death. The craggy steep,  
Where the poor dizzy shepherd crawls with care,  
And clings to every twig, gives us no pain ;  
But down we sweep, as stoops the falcon bold  
To pounce his prey. Then hup the opponent 'ill*



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*By the swift motion slung, we mount aloft ;  
So ships i' winter seas now sliding sink  
Adown the steepy wave, then tossed on 'igh  
Ride on the billows and defy the storm.'*

“That’s capital, too,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, conning the matter over, “werry superior readin’, indeed, but some’ow or other, I thinks I likes old Peter better ; it comes more nattural like. ’Ere, for instance, is a bit o’ fine sportin’ scenery, that makes one feel all over, ’unting like.”

Mr. Jorrocks then read as follows :—

“ ‘It was then the fox I saw, as we came down the ’ill ;—those crows directed me which way to look, and the ship ran from ’im as he passed along. The ’ounds are now on the werry spot, yet the ship stop them not, for they dash beyond them. Now see with wot heagerness they cross the plain !—Gallop no longer keeps his place ; Brusher takes it—see ’ow he flings for the scent, and ’ow

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impetuously he runs ! 'Ow heagerly he took the lead, and 'ow he strives to keep it. Yet Wictor comes hup apace. He reaches 'im. See wot an excellent race it is between them ! It is doubtful which will reach the cover first. 'Ow equally they run ! 'Ow heagerly they strain ! Now Wictor—Wictor !—Ah, Brusher, you are beaten ; Wictor first tops the 'edge. See there ! See 'ow they all take in their strokes ! The 'edge cracks with their weight, so many jump at once.'

“ Capital, indeed,” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks ; “ most excellent, I may say. All sheer 'unting—no nasty jealous stipple chase ridin', hurrying 'ounds a mile beyond the scent. No 'go-alongs ! there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,’ but real ‘Fox et preteria nihil,’ as Hego would say. Blow me tight, if such readin’ doesn’t parfectlie bust me,” added he, again retiring to the brandy amidst the loud and long-continued applause of the company.







